

GENERAL ORDERS, }
No. 179. }

WAR DEPARTMENT,

ADJUTANT GENERAL'S OFFICE,

Washington, April 23, 1864.

Another, and among the last of the heroes of our "Second War of Independence," is gone. Brevet Major General JOSEPH GILBERT TOTTEN, Chief of Engineers of the U. S. Army, departed this life on the 22d instant, in this city, in his seventy-sixth year.

General TOTTEN was born August 23, 1788, in New Haven, Connecticut, and graduated at the Military Academy in 1805, from which he was promoted to the Corps of Engineers, and, with a brief interval from 1806 to 1808, continued in that arm of service, passing honorably through every grade until he became, in 1838, Chief Engineer of the Army. The Senate, before his death, unanimously confirmed his nomination by the President, to be "Major General by brevet, for long, faithful, and eminent services."

General TOTTEN'S military career, of more than half a century, has been one of continued usefulness and distinguished services. In 1812, he was called to the field to assume the arduous and responsible position of Chief Engineer of the Army, on the Niagara frontier, where he took a conspicuous part in the attack on Queenstown Heights; and the following year, in the capture of Fort George, Upper Canada, and repulse of the British flotilla on Lake Ontario. In 1813-'14, he became Chief Engineer of the forces successively commanded by Generals Wilkinson, Izard, and Macomb; was in the attack on La Cole Mill, Lower Canada, and the battle of Plattsburg. In this brief war, General TOTTEN won the respect and admiration of his brother officers, and the marked approbation of the Government, which conferred upon him two brevets for his meritorious and distinguished services. On the return of peace, his high professional abilities were called into activity on the Board of Engineers, which projected our extended line of lake defenses and sea-coast fortifications. These works, most of which were planned by himself, are the enduring monuments to his memory. In the war with Mexico, General Scott summoned his early companion-in-arms to aid him in the siege of Vera Cruz, where, for his "gallant and meritorious conduct," General TOTTEN was breveted a Brigadier General. For the past twenty-six years he has been at the head of the Engineer Department, administering with untiring devotion, spotless integrity, and signal ability, the varied duties, the financial responsibilities, and the professional labors of that arm of service so essential to our national defense.

In addition to General TOTTEN's multiplied military avocations, he was an active member of the Light-House Board, from its organization in 1852; a Regent of the Smithsonian Institution, from its establishment by Congress, in 1846; a Corporator of the National Academy of Sciences, created in 1863; one of the Harbor Commissioners for the cities of New York and Boston, and a member of many scientific associations.

Distinguished for urbanity of manner, genial social qualities, and that great moral excellence which adorns the christian soldier and gentleman, he has left behind an exalted reputation worthy the emulation of his brother officers, and which his surviving children may well regard as a priceless legacy.

As a tribute to his memory, the officers of the Corps of Engineers and Military Academy will wear the prescribed badge of mourning for thirty days; and the day after the reception of this order at the Military Academy, half-hour guns will be fired there from sunrise to sunset, and the national flag be displayed at half-mast.

BY ORDER OF THE SECRETARY OF WAR :

E. D. TOWNSEND,
Assistant Adjutant General

OFFICIAL:

Assistant Adjutant General.